

This publication offers a summary overview of the case law of the Boards of Appeal of the European Patent Office (EPO). Users of the European Patent Convention (EPC), in particular qualified representatives, candidates for the European Qualifying Examination for Professional Representatives as well as patent examiners, can use it to locate decisions relevant to a current case easily and expeditiously. The aim of the work is not to render the content of the decisions, rather to make them easier to find. Furthermore, the work is structured such that regular amendments can be made easily, making it simpler to keep up to date with new decisions. As far as possible, decisions issued until November 2017 have also been taken into account.

The basic principle of the work is the classification of the decisions of the Boards of Appeal according to the Articles and Rules of the EPC and more precisely according to selected key words extracted from the text of an Article or Rule. Where a large number of decisions are assigned to a certain key word, the key word is subdivided into further themes and subthemes. For example, the key word *inventions [Art 52(2)]* is divided into the themes “characteristic feature”, “mixture of features” and “technicality”, the theme *technicality* itself subdivided into “technical problem” and “technical means”. An index of themes and subthemes, listed under their key word, is supplied in an appendix in order to facilitate access to those cases which are not directly evident from the key word itself. For each classified decision the reason for the classification is provided in italics where appropriate together with relevant paragraphs of the text.

A vertical line next to the case number indicates each decision newly added to the former edition.

Underlined case numbers indicate the decisions issued since EPC 2000 entered into force. For older decisions EPC 1973 is applicable.

As far as is possible, links to the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) are shown in order to provide improved access to the case law of the Boards of

Appeal of the EPA for users who are more familiar with the PCT system.

This publication is compiled in the three official languages of the EPO; the electronic version, making use of hypertexts, contains in addition the complete texts of all decisions as well as secondary pointers to related decisions and many links between the keys and the complete texts of the decisions.

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Stephan C. Fritz
Elisabeth K. Grünbeck
Ali Hijazi

authors@key2epc.com
<http://www.key2epc.com>